

A N
EXERCITATION
O N T H A T

Historical Relation,
Matth. 15. 1--9. Mark 7. 1--13.

C O N C E R N I N G

Eating with unwashen hands ;

By way of

APPENDIX or SUPPLEMENT

To the Discourse, concerning

INDIFFERENCIES :

A N D

More particularly, to Argument or Reason the Fourth ; to prove, That Indifferencies enjoin'd by Authority do not thereby become necessary ; or, That the Command of Authority does not render indifferent things, necessary.

Vincent Alsop

LONDON: Printed for *Benj. Alsop*, at the *Angel*
over against the *Stocks-Market*, 1680.

EXTRACT

FROM THE

PROCEEDINGS OF THE

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

OF THE PROVINCE OF

ONTARIO

IN THE YEAR 1871

AND 1872

AS PASSED BY THE

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

OF THE PROVINCE OF

ONTARIO

IN THE YEAR 1871

AND 1872

1. **T**hen came to Jesus Scribes and Pharisees, which were of Jerusalem, saying,

2. Why do thy Disciples transgress the tradition of the Elders? for they wash not their hands when they eat bread.

3. But he answered and said unto them, why do you also transgress the Commandment of God by your tradition?

4. For God commanded, saying, Honour thy Father and thy Mother; and he that curseth Father or Mother, let him dye the death.

5. But ye say, Whosoever shall say to his Father or his Mother, It is a gift, by whatsoever thou mightest be profited by me,

6. And honour not his father or his mother, he shall be free. Thus have ye made the Commandment of God of none effect by your tradition.

1. **T**hen came together to him the Pharisees, and certain of the Scribes which came from Jerusalem.

2. And when they saw some of his disciples eat bread with defiled (that is to say, with unwashen) hands, they found fault.

3. For the Pharisees, and all the Jews, except they wash their hands oft, eat not, holding the tradition of the Elders.

4. And when they come from the market, except they wash, they eat not. And many other things there be, which they have received to hold; as the washing of cups, and pots, brazen vessels, and of tables.

5. Then the Pharisees and Scribes asked him, Why walk not thy Disciples according to the tradition of the Elders, but eat bread with unwashen hands?

6. He answered and said unto them, Well has Esaias prophesied of you hypocrites; as it is written, This people honours me with their lips, but their heart is far from me.

7. Ye hypocrites, well did
Esaïas prophesie of you, say-
ing,

8. This people draws nigh
unto me with their mouth, and
honours me with their lips ;
but their heart is far from
me.

9. But in vain do they
worship me, teaching for
doctrines the Commandments
of men.

7. Howbeit, in vain do they
worship me, teaching for do-
ctrines the cōmandments of men.

8. For laying aside the Com-
mandment of God, ye hold the
tradition of men, as the wash-
ing of pots and cups, and many
other such like things ye do.

9. And he said unto them,
Full well ye reject the Com-
mandment of God, that ye may
keep your own tradition.

10. For Moses said, Ho-
nour thy Father and thy Mo-
ther, &c.

AN
EXERCITATION
ON

Mat. 15. 1—9. Mark 7. 1—13.

sect. 1. **T**HE imposed use of *Indifferencies* has been (like the *Canaanites* to the *Israelites*) pricks in the eyes, and thorns (or goads) in the sides of, i. e. matter of much mischief and vexation to, the Church of God almost in all ages; Especially, in the *Jewish* Church, when it drew towards the dregs, much of this sediment appeared. How far the *Papal, Antichristian* Church is over-run with this ill humour, is notorious: And it's one great evil which our *English* Church now labours and groans under at this day. 'Tis this, which has been the apple of contention, and bone of division; the stone of stumbling, and rock of offence among us, ever since the beginning of the Reformation, in the time of our *Jehoiachin*,
King

King *Edward* the 6th. And after many years freedom from this itch, it brake out again some years since, to our great disturbance, and scratching of one another.

Now for the better fixing our judgements concerning either our Liberty or Restraint in such cases, I shall enter upon a strict examination, and narrow consideration of this portion of Scripture, which furnishes us with one of the most pregnant, and pertinent instances, or Historical passages to this purpose, in the whole New Testament; which I shall examine from top to toe, that thereby we may discover how far forth it will help us, either one way or other, *i. e.* either for Conformity, or Non-conformity, in such like cases.

Self. 2. The whole passage contains a discourse between Christ, and the Scribes and Pharisees, concerning the observation of the Traditions of the Elders, occasion'd by the Disciples neglect thereof; for which the Scribes and Pharisees implead them to their Master, and quarrel him about it: In which he vindicates 'em at large, and blows up the very foundation of their complaint, by showing the invalidity, yea impiety, of these Traditions. This is the general prospect of the whole. In handling of which, I shall first distinctly consider the several particulars; and then make such Reflections upon

on 'em, and draw such Inferences from 'em, as they naturally afford, and may be conducive to my present design.

The Particulars contain'd in the foregoing General, take as follows. Here are (1) the *Accusers*. (2) The *Accused*. (3) The *Accusation*. (4) The *Defence*.

Sec. 3. First; The *Accusers*; *Scribes and Pharisees which were of Jerusalem*; or, *which came from Jerusalem*. These may be considered both in reference to their *Condition*, *Scribes and Pharisees*; and in reference to their *Habitation*, or the place from whence they came, *Jerusalem*.

(1) *Scribes*; this is a Title of Function or Employment; they might be either *Priests* or *Levites*, for we find *Scribes* of both sorts; *Priests*, as *Neh. 8.9. Ezra the Priest the Scribe*. So *Ezra 7. 11. Levites*, as *2 Chron. 34. 13. Of the Levites there were Scribes*, &c. *1 Chron. 24. 6. Semejash, the son of Nathaniel the Scribe, one of the Levites*. But which soever they were, they were, as to their Office and Employment, *Teachers and Expounders of the Law* in their *Schools and Synagogues*; as *Ezra 7. 6. — a ready Scribe in the Law of Moses. v. 10. He had prepared his heart to teach in Israel statutes and judgements. Neh. 8. 1--9, 13. Matth. 7. 29. He taught them as one having authority, and not as the Scribes*: and so elsewhere. And hence

They

They were commonly the most learned and conversant in the Law; as is implied by that question, *Matth. 17. 10. Why say the Scribes that Elias must first come?* and therefore, saith Gerard, *Dolissimi quique yegumatoris vocabantur*: and Brugenſis, *Scribe scientia auctoritatem sibi vendicabant*. Upon this account Herod consulted them about the place of Christ's Nativity, *Matth. 2. 4.*

(2) *Self. 4. Pharisees*; they are generally spoken of as *Teasers* too, *Matth. 16. 6, 12. leaven*, i.e. the *Dollrine of the Pharisees*. These were such as did separate themselves (as the word signifies) from other men; Yet

Negatively, (1) Not in regard of restraining their society and converse, either publick or private; for, they sate in the great Council with the *Sadducees*, *Acts 23. 6.* and *Herodians*; *Mark 3. 6.* went into other mens houses, *Mark 2. 16.* conversed with all sorts of men to Profelyte 'em, *Mat. 23. 15.* and conferred ordinarily with Christ and his Disciples, as here, and elsewhere: Nor (2) in restraining the publick assemblies, and places of publick worship; for *Luke 6. 6, 7.* there were Pharisees in the Synagogue at publick worship. But,

Positively, In respect of a singularity of Holiness and Devotion, which they pretended unto, and took upon them to have, above others. They'd seem to transcend the Rule of the

the State-Religion, and common Devotion of the Nation; to be in a higher Form than others, and to strain a note above *Ela*, in the scale of Holiness; and that in these two things especially: (1) In extream ceremoniousness; as in frequent washings, large Phylacteries, &c. and (2) in extraordinary devotion, as in long Prayers, much show of Fastings; tithing Mint, &c.

(3) *Scribes and Pharisees* joyn'd together. They were both of them, as has been said, the great Preachers and Professors of the Law; and here, as frequently elsewhere, they joyn together to oppose and oppress Christ and his Disciples, and go hand in hand; that what they cannot effect by single strength, they may obtain by their united forces. *Scribes* was a title of Function, and *Pharisee* of Devotion: a

a *Pharisei perfectioris exteriorum observantiae exemplum, scriba scientia auctoritatem sibi vendicabant.*
Brug.

the one were pretenders to more than ordinary strictness in Religion, the other valued themselves upon the score of their learning: And thus under the Banners and Colours of pretended devotion and learning, they fight against Christ.

(4) *From Jerusalem.* (1) Not of the ordinary and common sort, such as did belong to every Synagogue in inferior Cities, but of the chief City, *Jerusalem*; and such were likely,

a *Ei doctrina & religionis totius obtinebant arcem. Brug. Judæi in Galilæa submiserrunt Scribas & Phariseos, non vulgares illos, quales in singulis Galilææ Synagogis habebantur, sed qui Ierosolymis erant præcipui, qui eruditione, solertia, & auctoritate, addo etiam, & multâ reliquos superabant. Gef. Har.*

likely, & of the ablest and bitterest of them, and did excell the other Rusticks in learning and craft, and perhaps, in malice too. (2) They came a great way: Christ was now in the land of Genesaret, *Matth. 14. 34. Mark 6. 53.* which was a great way from *Ierusalem*, near a hundred miles, as I find by the Map; whereby we see, what pains

wicked men will take to oppose Christ, and create trouble to his Disciples and Servants.

Self. 5. From all which particulars it is obvious to observe, That corrupt Churchmen in high places, are the old, great sticklers for humane inventions, and ceremonious observances. These great Rabbies of the first magnitude, who shone with the greatest outward splendor, were the great Engines to withdraw the people from Christ, and the chief Supporters and Pillars of their old *Mumpsimus* customs. And so all along; None greater Enemies to pure, spiritual, Gospel-worship, than Ceremony-mongers, and superstitious Zealots. *Luther* had no sorer opposites out of Ale-houses, and Brothel-houses, than he had out of Religious Houses, as they called

called them. None more dangerously wound Religion, than they, who, before men, would seem the most zealous Patrons and Promoters of it. It's often seen, that the more learned, the more lewd: Wickedness is thereby armed with weapons, both for *Offence* and *Defence*. Unsanctified Learning, or learned wickedness, is a *Sin*. ἡ μάταια σοφία, as *Aristotle* speaks. It is like a Sword in a mad-mans hand, which enables him to cast about firebrands, arrows and

death; as it is *Prov.* 26.18.

Hence Philosophers are called by the Fathers, *Hæreticorum Patriarchæ*; the ringleaders and Captains of such as fight against Christ.

Nilil novi nec insolens est, ut illi qui primum sibi in Ecclesia vendicant, primi etiam sint, qui de opprimendo Christo & ejus Evangelio, consilia agitent. Ger.

2. *Self.* 6. The *Accused*; immediately and directly the Disciples, *Why do thy Disciples transgress, &c.* but secretly and collaterally, Christ himself; they shoot at him through the others sides; and seem to insinuate, as if he were to be blamed for teaching 'em no better, and suffering 'em to walk so disorderly, without reproving 'em for it: Thus they dealt also, *Matth.* 9. 14. -- *Why do we and the Pharisees fast oft, but thy disciples fast not?*

But I shall insist no further upon this, but hasten to that which I chiefly aim at, which is, the two following Points,

viz. The *Accusation* it self, and the *De-
fence*.

3. *señ.* 7. The *Accusation* it self, or
the *Practice*, or *Usage* concerning which
the *Contest* and *Dispute* arose, which is,

In *General*, a *Transgression* of the *Tradition*
of the *Elders*, or *Disobedience* to the *Injunctions*
of *Authority*.

Particularly, *Eating* with *unwashed hands*.
The former relates to the *Authority* enjoy-
ing; The latter is the *Practice* enjoyned.

As to the former, the *General*, I shall con-
sider (1) Who these *Elders* were. (2) What
was a *Tradition* of the *Elders*.

señ. 8. First, Who these *Elders* were.
The word [*Elders*] in its primary and origi-
nal sense, relates to *Age*, and denotes, either
such as lived a *great while*; even till they
came to be old; or, such as lived a *great*
while ago; those of former times; as *Deut.*
32. 7. *Heb.* *11. 2.* and so 'tis the same with
αἱρεσις, *Matth.* *5. 21.* and thence it's de-
rived to signify most commonly, both *Dig-
nity* and *Authority*; and so we find both in
Hebrew, *Greek*, *Latin*, and *English* (to name
no more) the words importing *Age* or *El-
dership*, viz. *זקנים*, *γερωνία*, *Senatus*, *Al-
dermen*, do denote both *Honour* and *Power*.
And

(1) This

(1) This sense is very frequent both in the Old and New Testament. I shall mention but a few places of the chief; as *Deut. 22. 15.*—*the Elders of City in the gate* (the place of Judicature). And they are sometimes called, *Elders of the people*, i. e. such who had authority over the people; as *Elders of a City*, are they that are in power in that City. Thus *Matth. 26. 3.* Then assembled together the chief Priests, and Scribes, and Elders of the people. So *c. 27. 1.* When the morning was come, all the chief Priests, and Elders of the people took counsel, &c.

Hence they ate commonly joyned with [*Rulers*]; as *1 King. 10. 1.* Jehu wrote letters—to the Rulers of *Jezrael*; and to the Elders. *Act. 4. 8.* Ye Rulers and Elders of Israel; and they are very frequently joyn'd with [*chief Priests, and Scribes and Pharisees*]; and then the distinction that was between them, I conceive may be stated thus; As they were distinguish'd from the Priests, they seem to be Lay-men (as we call 'em), and as distinguish'd from Scribes, they were such as were not brought up wholly in the study of the Law, or at least did not make that their Profession; but were some of the Nobility and Gentry, admitted to be Members of the *Sanhedrim*; as is most evident from these places following, *Acts 22. 5.* The High Priest doth bear me witness, with all the estate of the Elders; from whom also I received letters unto the brethren;

and went to Damascus, to bring them which were there, bound unto Jerusalem, for to be punished: and c. 24. 1. Ananias the High Priest descended with the Elders, who informed the Governour against Paul. Matth. 26. 59. Now the chief Priests and Elders, and all the Council, sought false witness against Jesus, &c. Mark 15. 1. The chief Priests held a consultation with the Elders and Scribes, and the whole Council. So that nothing is more clear, than that they were Members of the Council, and persons in, and of, Authority.

I have been the more full in this point, because *Grotius in loc.* thinks that these Elders here mentioned, though they were learned and wise men. and so possibly might be Members of the *Sanhedrim* upon that account; yet that the mention made of 'em here, does not relate to any such capacity they were in; but only, as celebrated Teachers, who were not only famous in their Generations, but were had in great veneration and esteem in after-times, and their judgements and dogmes were of great authority. And so *Beza* takes 'em too, only for the ancient Doctors, and not for persons in authority. But even *Grotius* himself elsewhere (*viz.* in *Acts* 4. 5.) gives this account of 'em, *Seniores, idem quod Senatores, & consules Urbium.* Elders are the same with the Senate, or Court of Aldermen, or, at least, Common-council-men, and Burgeses

gesses of Cities: And the places forementioned do most evidently and undeniably evince, that they were persons in authority, and members of the *Sanhedrim* (as I said before) or great Council of the Nation: And therefore

Sell. 9. (2) They were the proper Judges of Ecclesiastical affairs, to whose cognisance matters of Religion did appertain. *Hi doctrina & religionis totius obtinebant arcem, & inquisitionem proinde, censuramque doctrinarum sibi arrogabant. Commoti igitur famâ crebrescente de Jesu, emiserunt è suis quosdam (sicut etiam Marc. 3. 22.) qui observarent quid doceret, quidque faceret, in Galileâ, Jesus, novus ille Doctor, ab ipsis nec missus, nec probatus, saith Brugenfis.*

And particularly, It was the peculiar privilege of those Doctors who were Members of the great Council to frame such Decrees, Constitutions or Traditions. This I gather from that passage of the *Targum* on *Eccles. 12. 12.* where it is said, *רַבְּנֵי סַנְהֶדְרִין מְרִי הִלְכֵּתִין*, which the Translation in our *Polyglot Bible* renders *Magistri Sanhedrim, scil. ductores viarum*; as if *הִלְכֵּתִין* were to be taken according to the proper signification of the word, from *הלך* *ambulavit*; whereas it is most usually taken in the Metaphorical sense, for *Consuetudo, ratio, mos, ritus, judicium*; and among the

the Rabbins and Talmudists it signifies (saith Buxtorf) *Constitutio juris, sententia, decisio, traditio decisa*; & usu ac consuetudine recepta & approbata, secundum quod incedendum & vivendum. *Lex Talm. in voc. 777*; and accordingly it is to be rendred here, *Doctores synedrii, qui sunt Domini consuetudinum, sive constitutionum juridicarum. The Doctors of the Council, who are the grand Masters of Traditions.* And hence

(3) We may easily imagine the reason why the Scribes and Pharisees here, were so much concern'd at this neglect of the Disciples, viz. because their own Copyhold was toucht, and their own authority lay at stake, inasmuch as they were the Successors of these Elders; so that the slight that was put upon the one, redounded to the disparagement of the other. *Non mirum Scribas violatione traditionum seniorum cito offensores fuisse, quod eo & ipsorum auctoritas elevari videretur, qui jam Seniorum locum tenerent, illorum successores, & institutorum propagatores, saith Brugenſis.* Hence Christ calls 'em *your Traditions.*

So then, The Elders here meant were such as lived in former times, who were persons of great Dignity and Authority, to whose cognisance matters of Religion did appertain, and to whom it belonged to form and frame these Constitutions or Traditions.

Where,

Where, by the way, you may take notice (and that you may take the more and better notice of it, know, That it is the Observation of the prodigiously learned Dr. *Stillingfleet*) That the word [*Elder*] or *Presbyter*, according to the common use of it, has a higher Character, and is of more excellent import, than the word [*Bishop*]; the former noting Dignity and Authority, (as has been show'd); the latter, only matter of Duty, Charge, Trouble and Business. His words are, *Επισκοπος, a name importing Duty more than Honour, and not a Title above Presbyter, but rather used by way of diminution and qualification of the power implied in the name [Presbyter].* Iren. p. 286. But this by the by. Thus you see, Who these Elders were.

2: The next thing to be spoken unto, is to show, What the Traditions of these Elders were: And here I shall consider (1) their *Nature*. (2) *Original*. (3) *Validity*, or, what stress they laid upon 'em.

Señ. 10. First, What a Tradition is. A Tradition, in general, is something delivered from one to another: and it is twofold, *Divine*, and *Humane*.

(1) *Divine*, which is, either matters of *Doctrine*, delivered either by God himself, or some immediately inspired by him; and so, both the Verb *παράδοσις*, and the

Noun ~~traditions~~ are used concerning the points of Christianity. Thus the Apostle Paul received from God, and delivered to the Church the Doctrine of the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, 1 Cor. 11. 23. and of Christ's Death and Resurrection. 1 Cor. 15. 3. yea, the whole Doctrine of the Gospel in general is a Tradition, delivered or conveyed to us. Rom. 6. 17. 2 Thes. 2. 15. Jude 3. Again, Divine Traditions respect matters of Practice also; and these are Constitutions, or Ordinances appointed by God, or some immediately inspired by him, for the use of the Church, as the word seems to be taken, 1 Cor. 11. 2. Now I praise you Brethren, that you remember me in all things, and keep the Ordinances (Margin, Traditions) as I have delivered them to you. And more plainly 2 Thes. 3. 6.

(1) Humane; called here. Traditions of the Elders; your Traditions, v. 3, 6. your own Traditions. Mark 7. 9. the Traditions of men, Mark 7. 8. Col. 2. 8. and of the Fathers, Gal. 1. 14. And these likewise are either Doctrinal, concerning some points of Doctrine, as Matth. 5. 21, &c. and therefore are called expressly the Doctrine of the Pharisees, and of the Sadducees. Matth. 16. 12. Concerning which, Grotius observes, That that which the Greek Philosophers called *διδασκαλία*, Christ here calls *διδασκαλία*, a Doctrine, Instruction, Article, or point of Faith;
or

or else, they are *Practical*, being customs and external observances, invented by men, and delivered from hand to hand from Father to Son: and such Traditions were these here of the Elders; and those *Col. 2. 20, 21.* And these are the Traditions under Consideration.

Now such a Tradition, is an Ordinance, * Institution, Canon, Constitution, Resolution, Decision, or Determination of their

* *וְאֵלֶּיךָ יָשָׁב, institutum
hoc constitutionem vertere
possumus. Eras.*

Forefathers the Governours of the Church, delivered down from one to another, enjoying the observation of such and such Rites, Ceremonies or Practices.

The former of these sorts, *viz. Divine* Traditions, are the Rule and Ground of our Faith, Worship and Obedience; The latter, *Humane*, do naturally produce Superstition and Will-worship: and of this sort there were multitudes upon all occasions, so that the whole *Talmud* is little else than a Collection of 'em. I'll give you a taste, and but a taste of 'em. It was a Tradition, that on a Festival-day it was not lawful to blow the fire with a pair of bellows, because that had some resemblance of a Mechanick work; but they might blow it through a hollow Cane. Again, On a Festival-day it was not lawful to lay wood on the fire in an artificial manner, so as
to

to resemble a building. But enough of these.

Set. 11. Secondly. What was the ground they went upon, or the occasion of their first broaching these Traditions? In general, it was, as they express it, לעשות סייג לתורה To make a hedge to the Law, that men should not break in upon it to transgress it: and this was a specious colour for all their Traditions; for they pretending to make Constitutions to fence the Law from violation, and to raise the observance of it the higher, they multiplied inventions and fancies of their own brains, and set 'em up for Laws, and so made the Law indeed nothing worth. I shall give you an instance but in one of 'em. The written Law forbade, *Tbou shalt not seeke a kid in his Mothers milk*, Exod. 23. 19. Now to make sure, as they pretended, that this Law should not be violated, they fenced it with this Tradition, *Tbou shalt not seeke any flesh whatsoever in any milk whatsoever*.

Thus we see, how very apt men are to set their posts by God's Pillars, to light up their Candles to his Sun, to put their varnish upon his Gold, and, like Botchers, to patch their inventions upon his Institutions. The Jewish Rabbies, under a specious pretence of Piety, brought in whole loads of this kind of trash, which they called

Sepi-

Sepimenta legis, but were indeed but *impe-*
imenta, because God's Commands were
 thereby frustrated. as our Saviour Christ
 shows here, in the sequel of this discourse.
 This is the general reason: But

As for the particular grounds of particu-
 lar Traditions, I shall have occasion to men-
 tion some afterwards.

Se^{ct.} 12. Thirdly, What was their Va-
 lidity? Of what account they were among
 the *Jews*, and what value they put upon
 'em. appears by many passages in their
 Authors. It is a saying of the *Talmudists*,
 דְּבָרֵי קַבְלָה קְדָבְרֵי חוֹנָה רָמוֹ *Verba Ca-*
bala aequiparantur verbis Legis. Here they
 set them cheek by jole (as we say) with the
 Commands of God: but this is not all;
 they set 'em even above the Law of God
 it self, and make that to lacquey behind: for
 this is another saying in the *Talmud* (as
Grotius quotes it) *Plus est in verbis Scri-*
barum quam in verbis Legis; *There's more*
weight in the words of the Scribes, than in the
words of the Law. And Dr. *Lightfoot* quotes
 another to the same purpose, *The words of*
the Elders are more lovely than the words of
the Law, and more weighty than the words of
the Prophets. Hence they say of this Tra-
 dition in particular, *That he that eats his*
bread with unwashen hands, sins as grievously
as if he lay with a whore. So saith *R. Jose* in
Talm.

Talm. Sota. c. 7. yea, saith R. Akiba, he deserves to dye for it; and accordingly, water being once brought to him both for drinking and washing, and the greatest part of it being casually spilt, the remainder he used for washing, saying, That it's better to dye, than to transgress the tradition of the Elders. And this is a saying too, among them. Whosoever dwells in the land of Israel, and eats his ordinary food after a cleanly manner, and speaks in the holy language, and saith over his Phylacteries morning and evening, may be confident that he shall obtain happiness in the world to come.

But lest any should take these Traditions for matters of Counsel only, or bare opinion, which laid no manner of obligation upon them, and because a passage of *Grotius*, formerly quoted and animadverted upon, may seem to look that way (though what has been said already under this last head, does abundantly prove what an high opinion they had of them in point of their obligatoriness) Yet further, as I shew'd before, that the word [*Elder*] denotes persons of a publick Character, and such as were in places of power and authority, and not only persons in a private capacity; so I shall further prove, by several Arguments, that the Traditions of these Elders were not points of opinion only, but matters of injunction and command.

Self. 13. (1) This Tradition is expressly called מִצְוַת חֲכָמִים a Precept of the wise men, both by Maimonides in *Hilchos Brachos*, c. 6. sect. 2. נְטִילַת יָדִים מִצְוַת חֲכָמִים וְכוּ'.
Washing the hands is a precept of the wise men, to which we are absolutely bound to yield obedience, according to what is written, Deut. 17. 11. According to the sentence of the Law which they shall teach thee---thou shalt do. And also by the Talmud, washing of hands is by reason of the command of the wise men. And accordingly.

(2) These Traditions are called, *Commandments of men*, here by Christ, *Mark 7. 7.* and opposed to the *Commandments of God*, v. 8. and what is called in one verse, a *Tradition*, is called in the other, *Commandments of men*; so that they seem to be convertible terms, *Mark 7. 7, 8. In vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men. For laying aside the Commandment of God, ye hold the tradition of men, &c.*

(3) The word [*transgress*] (*why do thy Disciples transgress the tradition of the Elders?*) implies, that they held them obligatory; and that these Traditions laid an obligation upon them; for, why else do they tax the Disciples for the transgression thereof, if they did not take 'em to have the nature of a law? For, Transgression properly belongs to a law, or something that has a binding power in it, 1 *John 3. 4.*

(4) The

(4) The drift and design of our Saviour's Answer and Vindication, is to show that the people were not obliged thereby, and that these Traditions were of no force or validity at all ; which shows that they look't upon 'em as obligatory.

(5) These *Elders*, who were the Authors of these Traditions, were members of the Senate, and Rulers (as was proved afore), and consequently, a Tradition, or Decision of their's, had the nature of a law, and was of a binding power, being the act of the whole body ; as we find it was in this particular case: for the whole body of the Council espoused the quarrel of this Rite; for they Excommunicated *R. Eliezer*, because he slighted this Ceremony of washing of hands ; and then when he was dead, they commanded a great stone to be laid on his Coffin, in token of their detestation of him ; or to note, That his Coffin was to be stoned ; saith the *Talmud*, in *Edajoth*, cap. 5.

(6) The *Hebrew* Edition of *Matthew* by *Munster*, renders [traditions of the Elders] by מִשְׁפָּטֵי הַזִּקְנִים. Now מִשְׁפָּטֵי is rendered by *Buxtorf*, *Passum*, *decretum*, *statutum*, *constitutio*, *sententia* ; from מִשְׁפָּט *decernere*, *statuere*, *definire*.

And thus we have dispatch't the consideration of the General ground of their complaint, viz. A transgression of the Tradition
of

of the Elders, by showing, Who these Elders were: What a Tradition of the Elders was, both as to the Nature, Ground, and Validity thereof.

Come we now to the particular cause of their quarrel, viz. *Eating with unwashen hands*. And here many things offer themselves to our consideration: As

Self. 14. (1) This washing is called by the Jews נְטִילַת יָדַיִם לְסַעֲוֵדָה *Lifting up the hands* (viz. to wash) for dinner; because in washing they lifted them up in a formal, ceremonious manner (as we shall see anon), or, as St. Mark expresses it, *ἀνίσταντες* diligently.

(2) The Rabbins say it was to be used only before the eating of ordinary bread. Thus Maimon. in *Hilchos Brachos*, c. 6. sect. 1. *Quicumque comedit panem super quo convenit recitare benedictionem istam Benedicamus, &c. qui educit panem e terra, opus habet lavare manus ab initio & fine, etiamsi sit panis continuus.* (The Reasons whereof the learned Reader may see in Buxtorf's *Discourse De lotionibus manuum*, sect. 11.) And therefore you may observe that express mention is made of bread here several times, *Matth. 15. 2. Mark 7. 2, 3.* And therefore they allow'd a man to eat fruit, cheese, herbs or fish with unwashen hands.

(3) This

(3) This *washing* was from *רָשִׁי אֶצְבָּעוֹתָם*, the ends of the fingers, wherewith they took their meat, *עַד הַפֶּה* usque ad iuncturam, to the joyning; which some understand, of the joyning of the fingers to the hand, but most generally, of the joyning of the hands to the arm, at the wrist (and not of the joyning up at the elbow, as *Capellus* contends;) for which *Buxtorf* produces many passages in his *Vindic. Exercit. in hist. Institut. Can. Domin. advers. animad. Lud. Capelli. sect. 55.*

Self. 15. (4) For the *Manner*, it was performed, either by pouring the water upon the hands by another person, or by one's self, if none else were at hand to do it; or else by dipping the hands in the water. If it were done by pouring, the water was to be poured upon the hands two or three times. First, If the hands be dirty, to cleanse 'em from the dirt; (1) To take away the moral uncleanness (as they accounted it). (3) To cleanse them from that second water, which took the moral uncleanness to it self, and therefore must all be washed off.

Several other Rules and Directions are given, both as to the *Quality* and *Quantity* of the water; as also concerning the *Vessel* that the water is to be put into, which may be seen in the forementioned Author, *Self. 24-28.*

(5) They

(5) They were to lift up their hands (whence it was called *Netilas yadayim*, as was said) that the water might not run back from the hands to the fingers, and so defile them again: for they held, that the water that was poured upon the hands did contract moral defilement thereby, as was said.

(6) They were to pull off Rings, Plaisters, or any such thing that was upon the hands, and to rub 'em well, and then dry 'em thoroughly.

These things I have run over briefly, that I might hasten to the following particulars, which are more to my purpose.

Señ. 16. (7) This usage or practice of washing the hands before meat, was not contrary to the Word of God, or any where forbidden by it in particular; It is no where said in the whole Bible, Thou shalt not wash thy hands before meat, no more than it is said any where, Thou shalt not baptize with the sign of the Cross; Thou shalt not wear a Surplice, &c. Nay,

(8) It was so far from that, that they pretended a particular ground from Scripture for it, viz. that command, *Levit. 15. 11.* *Whomsoever he toucheth that hath the issue, and hath not rinsed his hands in water, he shall wash*

his cloaths, &c. The account of which you have at large in the *Talmud*, *Massecteth*, Col. 1. (as 'tis quoted by *Buxtorf* in the fore-mentioned Discourse, *sect.* 4. 5.) in these words, נטילת ידים וכו', *Lotio manuum ad communem & propbanum cibum est propter co- habionem Truma*, (concerning which, see his *Lex. Talm. Voc.* פרום). Imo etiam propter praeceptum sapientum. Quale praeceptum? *Avai* dixit, Illud praeceptum, quo jubemur obtemperare verbis sapientum. *Rabba* dixit; Imo propter id quod *R. Eliezer ben Ezech* dixit, qui docuit, ex eo quod scriptum est *Levit. 15. 11.* *Omnis autem quem tetigerit seminisfluus, & manus suas non abluerit aqua, &c.* collegisse ac decrevisse sapientes, lotionem manuum esse ex lege. *Grosius* in loc. gives another account of it, viz. That these *Jewish Rabbies* thought that if any uncircumcised person, or any one of their own Nation legally unclean, had touch- ed either the meat or drink, or any other thing that did touch the meat or drink, as their hands wherewith they were to take the meat or drink, or had touch't the pots wherein the meat was boil'd, or the cups out of which they were to drink, that then the meat or drink was defiled, and did com- municate its defilement or uncleanness first to the body, and then to the soul of the per- son that did eat or drink thereof: where- upon, as an Antidote or Remedy hereof, these

these cleanly persons prescribed such a ceremonious, methodical, artificial kind of washing. But I take the former account our of their own Authors, to be the most authentick, and pertinent.

Whereby we may perceive that this Tradition of theirs has the advantage of our Ceremonies, for there is no particular precept alledged for the establishment or countenancing any of them; yea, there's little or nothing of Reason can be said for 'em. (And in this respect indeed they may be called *Innocent Ceremonies*; as we call those *Innocents*, who have nothing of Reason in 'em;) but their Defenders, when assaulted with Reason, are fain to shelter themselves under the wings of Authority, and cry *King's Truce*, as boys do, *i. e.* They are commanded by Authority, and therefore we must yield obedience, when we are enjoyned nothing that is contrary to the Word of God: But though they pretended warrant from Scripture, yet

(9) They did not enjoyn it as immediately binding the conscience, or commanded by God directly, but only by consequence; and therefore they call'd it *מצות חכמים*, (as was said before) a *Precept of the wise men*, and said it was *מִדְּבַרֵי סוֹפְרִים* one of the words or commands of the Scribes, but that it was not *מִדְּאֲרֵי־תֹרָה* any of the commands of the law. L. 2 Nay

Nay (Lastly) it might seem to be a point of Civility, and a piece of cleanliness, which no doubt but both Christ and the Disciples might use upon occasion, though only as a matter of civility, wherein Religion was not concern'd either one way or other, whether it were done or not.

And this too is more than can be said on the behalf of our Ceremonies; for there is no such, either Decency, or Conveniency in the use of them.

But yet for all this Christ here opposes and condemns this Tradition, which brings me to the last Point to be spoken unto, viz.

4. And lastly, (*sest. 17.*) The Defence, Plea or Vindication that Christ makes in the behalf of his Disciples in this particular; which is (1) by way of Retortion, or Recrimination, *Why do you also transgress the command of God by your tradition, Matth. 15. 3.* (2) By way of Reprehension, or taxing them for their hypocrisie, *Mark 7. 6. He answered and said unto them, Well has Esaias prophesied of you hypocrites, &c.* (3) By way of Instruction to the people, *Matth. 15. 10. And he called the multitude, and said unto them, Hear and understand, &c.*

1. By way of Retortion, or Recrimination, *Why do you also transgress the Command of God*

by your Tradition? For God commanded, saying, &c. They accuse the Disciples for transgressing the Tradition of the Elders, and Christ accuses them for transgressing the Command of God, by their observing these Traditions; which was certainly much more blame-worthy than the other. And here I observe,

(1) That in those words, v. 3. he undermines the very foundation upon which all this tottering building of Traditions stood; For it was a principle among them, That the Traditions of the Elders were to be observed most religiously, without any exception, contradiction, or dispute; but now Christ here proves, That some of their Traditions did palpably and evidently contradict and enterfere with the Law of God; and therefore they were not all of 'em so strictly and inviolably to be observed, as they held. And then,

(2) As to this particular instance he gives, v. 4--6. I observe, He does not so much reply to their particular question, nor argue against this Tradition in particular, which the Pharisees here stood up for, but chuses rather to instance in one which did more evidently and by plain consequence overthrow one of the Commands of God: so that hereby He seems to me plainly to intimate, and insinuate, That all

such Traditions, i. e. Ecclesiastical Canons, Constitutions, Injunctions, and obligatory Determinations, concerning unnecessary things, (whereby men endeavour to render that practice necessary, which God has left free) are contrary to the Law of God, and consequently invalid and non-obligatory. Understand it, of what is not necessary, neither in its own Nature, nor by any Circumstance; according to what has been delivered in the foregoing Discourse. Now that this is the drift of Christ in these words, I prove thus:

Either He does here by this one instance argue against, and condemn all Traditions in general, as well as this one, or he does not. If he does not, then his arguing is inconsequent and unconcluding, as to the point in hand: For the Pharisees might reply, Well! suppose you can pick out one Tradition, which you say does plainly derogate from a Command of God, yet what's that to the case before us? This that we implead your Disciples for, is none of those, but founded upon a particular law; and therefore that stands firm, and ought to be observed, as not liable to this exception; and so, they are guilty for not observing it. But now that Christ should argue thus loosely and incoherently, is by no means to be admitted. Shall He who gave to man the faculty of

Reason, be defective in any point of Reason himself? As the Psalmist argues concerning God's Knowledge and Providence, *Psal.* 94. 9, 10. *He that planted the ear, shall not be hear? He that formed the eye, shall be not see? — He that teaches man knowledge, shall not he know?* So may we say in this case. True, the Reason of Christ's discourses sometimes lies very deep, that it's hard for us to fathom it with our short understandings, and to attain to a clear apprehension of it: but however, we cannot without blasphemy admit of any flaw in it, or deny it to be firm, valid and concluding.

But then, if He did here argue against all such Traditions in general, my Observation stands good, and I have gained my Point. And hence it will follow,

(3) That to observe such Traditions, and Institutions, is so far from being a Duty, that it is a sin; because thereby the Law of God is transgressed.

Self. 18. 2: Christ's Reply is by way of Reprehension, and taxing their hypocrisie, *Matth.* 15. 7--9. *Ye hypocrites, &c.* The people indeed had a great veneration for them, and lookt upon them as great Devoto's and Religionists: but Christ puts off their vizard, uncovers their nakedness, and lays open their hypocrisie; and that, by applying to them

that prophecie of *Isaiab*. *This people draw nigh*, &c. i. e. they pretend a great deal of Religion in their outward carriage, and seem to be very diligent in all external duties, but all is but from the teeth outward: their Religion is but a meer carcass, without any life, or soul, or spirit in it; the heart is wanting. Here he opens the fountain of this evil, which was, The placing all Religion in outward ceremonies, and superstitious observances.

V. 9. *But in vain do they worship me*] i. e. They shall not only not get any good by such worship, but shall bring upon themselves the wrath of God, and consequently a great deal of evil and mischief, by their thus --teaching for *Doctrines*] i. e. instead of *Doctrines*, the *commandments of men*.] The word [*Doctrine*] is usually taken for those points either of *Faith* or *Duty*, which are delivered in Preaching; and here it must relate, particularly, to *matters of worship*, as is evident, both because that is the business in hand, which Christ is here speaking of; and also, by comparing these words with those of *Isaiab*, whence they are taken, viz. *Isa* 29. 13. where the words run thus: --and *their fear towards me is taught by the precepts of men*. *Their fear towards me*, i. e. their worship of me; as *fear* is taken, 2 *King*. 17. 32, 33. And then by [*the commandments of*

of men] is meant, those Traditions of the Elders before mentioned; what he calls [your traditions] and [your own traditions] before, here he calls [the commandments of men.] i. e. All such humane inventions and institutions in God's worship, which have no good ground, nor warrant from the Word of God, though they may pretend some. *Ea qua fundamentum habent in persuasione mere humana, & non divinitus tradita*, saith Grotius.

So that the sense of the whole clause is this,--Teaching for Doctrines the commandments of men] i. e. By their thus preaching up, and pressing the observation of their Traditions and humane Inventions in the worship of God, instead of those things which are of divine Institution and Appointment, they render their worship vain. 'Tis the property of Scripture alone to be profitable for Doctrine, 2 Tim. 3. 16. Hence Titus is required to show uncorruptness in doctrine; Tit. 2. 7. i. e. to deliver the pure truths of God not dashed with the water, nor alloy'd with the lead of humane inventions, whereby 'tis corrupted, as wine is with water, and gold with lead. So that, as the matter of all our Teaching is laid down Positively, in that Commission, *Matth. 28. ult. Teaching them to observe whatsoever I have commanded you*: So here, teaching and urging any

any thing in the worship of God, not only contrary to, but besides, the Word, is condemned in these words by Christ; and they that take their measures in Worship, from the Commandments of men, their worship is vain, bootless, and unprofitable, yea mischievous and abominable: And such persons Christ pronounces to be Hypocrites; and such we must take 'em for, except we will contradict his judgement. Your zealous assertors of, and great sticklers for, the observation of humane inventions in God's worship, are great hypocrites in Christ's account; and they that urge and impose such things as strictly, or more strictly than the observation of divine Institutions, are guilty of gross hypocrisie, whatever they pretend, as to Decency, Uniformity, Authority, or the like. For, though a practice be really a matter of Decency and Convenience, and thereupon some Rules and Directions may be given by Authority about it; yet it ought not to be enjoyn'd as strictly, or as much stress laid upon it, as upon the substantials and vitals of Worship: as for example. In point of *Time*, or *Place*, or *Gesture*, or *Habit*, 'tis to be supposed, and I think we may well take it for granted, that generally, neither Ministers nor People are such bruits, and so void of understanding, as to perform Duties with such undue Circumstances,

cumstances, at such inconvenient Times, in such inconvenient Places, with such rude Postures, in such undecent Habits, as may render the service, or worship notoriously undecent, and wholly unprofitable, and inconsistent with the Glory of God, and the good of Souls: or, if any particulars should be guilty of such foul miscarriages, then let Governours take notice thereof, and censure offenders proportionably to the demerit of the crime; and not *perdere substantiam propter accidentia*, imbroid the whole Church by, and silence hundreds or thousands of inoffensive Ministers for non-compliance with. Impositions about such matters. Certainly the greatest evil that can be imagin'd to follow upon some irregular, undue, circumstantial miscarriage in worship, is not proportionable to the thousandth part of that mischief which we have always found has follow'd upon these Impositions.

Self. 19. 3. The last method that Christ uses for the Vindication of his Disciples for their Non-conformity to this Imposition, is by way of Instruction. to inform the people, What it is that really and properly does pollute a man. *Matth. 15. 19-20. Mark 7. 14-23.* Where, as before he undermin'd the foundation of all their Traditions in general, so here he overthrows the ground-work

work of this Tradition in particular, by teaching and proving, that eating with unwashen hands defiles not a man, *Matth. 15. 20.* and if so, then there's no need to wash before meat. But this being besides my present design, I shall give it a discharge from any further attendance. And,

Scd. 10. For a close of all, I shall wind up the substance of all that has been said in a narrow compass. Here was (1) A *Law*, Precept, Injunction, Constitution, or call it what you will, it was something they look't upon as obligatory; and that (2) made by *lawful authority*, yea, the Supreme authority of the Nation: and this (3) about a *lawful matter*, viz. that which was not anywhere forbidden by the Law of God, nor contrary to any command; yea (4) it was a matter of civil *Decency*: and (5) that which they pretended some ground from Scripture for: And yet for all this (6) this Law or Command did not oblige: for then the neglect thereof would have been blame-worthy; which yet it was not, as appears by Christ's Vindication of his Disciples for it: though they did not obey this Command, nor observe this Custom, yet he does not in the least blame 'em for it. Nay,

(7) The Observation of it upon such an account, was not only not necessary, but unlawful;

unlawful ; as appears, in that Christ blames and taxes the Pharisees for this and such like observances ; and therefore (Lastly) *Nonconformity* herein was so far from being a sin, that it was their *Duty*, and *Conformity* or *Compliance* had been a sin ; from all which I infer, That

A lawful practice, enjoyn'd by lawful Authority, is not thereby, and purely on that account, made necessary: but there is something else required, viz. That the matter of the law be necessary antecedently to the law, either in its own Nature, or in respect of some Circumstance (as has been shewed in the foregoing discourse about Indifferencies), or else it obliges not.

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